9/25/71

Dear Howard,

Bad news travels so fast you don't have to tell me what happened to your submission.

Don't be discouraged by and it do not take uncritically the alleged reason given to you. As I told you, you had much working for you there from my previous experience with Dion. He flipped over WW in 1965, was certain they'd go for it, wanted them to, made a special trip to Boston to try and accomplish it, and failed. His embarrassment was great because I had asked him in advance to just tell me if there would be a policy rather than a literary determination and not waste time for both of us. He read the book very fast. You may be interested in reading the brief notes I make of this at that time, when - intended writing "Dick Darins..."

I do not know if the criticism is justified. You can evaluate that yourself, as those others of us who have read your work can advise you. I am inclined to believe, without reading the book, that it is not, that it is the hoked-up contraption that would trouble their consciences least.

If you consider it invalid, while you should hope against it, you might also brace yourself for another contraption from the next submission.

Rather remarkably, I refused to rewrite WW to emphasize this as a condition of publication by Norton. I would not state the case for conspiracy stronger than our knowledge then permitted, regardless of my belief. They wanted me to make it a conspiracy by government. (This,too, i on file here - and it involved a man known as a great liberal used as a consultant by Norton for a different reason.)

If you ar interested, we can discuss this when you are here. However, without benefir of having seen your ms, I suggest that there is nothing any responsible publisher might regard as falwing it that is not subject to remedy in what most publi hers also would regard as normal editing. You might or might not like the editing, but all publi hers expect to edit and have staffs of competent personnel for this purpose.

What I am telling you also includes the possibility that a change you might make for increasing prospects of publishability in one house might be unattractive to another.

And not to be too discouraged. -t is the way of life on this subject, regardless of what others may say and seem to believe, in some cases.

Interruptions of various kinds have delayed my reading and contracting on M. I. I am now at p. 51 only. However, in the 3rd chapter I note what I'd forgotten, my spotting in the CBS crap and specifying what you did so well for me, checking the non-existing sources of autopsy data. And I see what I had also forgotten, how much more important my priming and needling of Levine was than the dramatic part that lingered in my mind, the bit on the chart only.

Chins up!

Best regards,